



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 25 June 1968



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THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
25 JUNE 1968

1. France

Today will be a day of intense bargaining as French politicians set up slates for the run-off elections this Sunday. The deadline for picking candidates is midnight tonight.

The Gaullists are pressing center candidates to withdraw in their favor; the Federation of the Left and the Communists are compromising on a single candidate in each constituency.

De Gaulle and his allies got 43.6 percent of the vote on Sunday and an unprecedented 142 Assembly seats assured. Only 12 opposition candidates managed to obtain the 50 percent of the vote necessary for election on the first round. The Gaullists, however, are anxious to avoid overconfidence, and they are urging their followers to get back and vote in the next ballot. The government also may have some problems with voters who shift sides just to keep De Gaulle from getting a landslide.

2. United Kingdom

Labor troubles have raised new threats to Britain's economic recovery program. Airline pilots and auto workers are out; railway workers are holding a "slowdown." The railway men have a tradition of brinksmanship, however, and may back down. If they do not, and the other strikes go on for any length of time, the pound could come under heavy pressure again.

3. Korea

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4. Berlin

The West Germans are still groping around for some way to get back at the East Germans for imposing travel restrictions. Bonn, however, is unwilling to resort to tough measures, such as counterrestrictions on interzone trade. The Germans would prefer that their allies make strong representations to the Soviets.

5. Lee Kuan Yew

Some of Lee's colleagues in government are questioning his plans for a long sabbatical that would include a rather lengthy stay in the US. Lee wants to take off from August to December and, among other things, "observe" the American elections. At the moment, Lee is somewhat undecided as to just what his timing will be. He does seem determined, however, to visit the US sometime during the summer.

6. Dominican Republic

Santo Domingo's Autonomous University is traditionally something of an extremist cauldron. Friday's shootout between rival student factions left one dead. Tension is at flash point and it could happen again. Balaguer may have to move against the university, but, for the moment, it does not appear that trouble will spread beyond the campus.

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7. Czechoslovakia

The Czechs apparently have had to make the best of an unpleasant situation and allow some Soviet combat troops into the country to join the current Warsaw Pact exercise. Prague's earlier opposition to the entry of Russian troops was emphasized by press releases stating categorically that only staff elements would come to Czechoslovakia.

While the presence of Soviet troops on Czech soil has an undeniable psychological impact, the Russian units are not large and the Czechs apparently believe they will be pulled out when the exercise ends later this week.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of U S
Political Attitudes



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Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
for the President's Eyes Only

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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Peking-Hanoi Rail Service: There continue to be indications that rail service between China and North Vietnam is disrupted. The disruption of passenger service was initially noted in a message of 7 June when Chinese rail authorities in Peking requested Vietnamese officials in Hanoi to agree to cease coach service between the two capitals until further notice.

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Despite some disruption, high priority military shipments are probably getting through. The rail difficulties may result partly from civil disorders and partly from floods in south China. In any event North Vietnam undoubtedly has sufficient inventories to minimize the impact of delays.

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Reaction to Vice President Humphrey's Statement: Xuan Thuy told a luncheon meeting of the Anglo-American press club on 24 June that Hanoi was not prepared to conclude an armistice, as suggested by Vice President Humphrey, before a total end to all US air raids on North Vietnam. Regarding Humphrey's statement that a cease-fire would enhance chances for the Paris talks, Xuan Thuy said, "We must not mix up aggressors and their victims." He added that the only objective of the Paris talks now is to agree on a cessation of the bombing.

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